

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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SUBJECT: KORNIYENKO TAKES HARD LINE ON CONSTRUCTION PROBLEMS

BEGIN SUMMARY. DURING JANUARY 25 MEETING WITH AMBASSADOR,
DEPUTY FONMIN KORNIYENKO TOOK HARD LINE ON APARTMENTS,
SCHOOL, DACHA, AND ACCESS-CORRIDOR TO NEW CHANCERY SITE.
THREATENED OVERALL SOVIET SLOWDOWN UNLESS IMPASSE
ON SOVIET APARTMENT CONSTRUCTION IS QUICKLY RESOLVED. SAID
HE WOULD LOOK INTO QUESTION OF SCHEDULING USIA EXHIBIT
AT LENINGRAD. END SUMMARY.

1. AMBASSADOR ACCOMPANIED BY POLCOUNSELOR
PAID INITIAL CALL ON DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER KORNIYENKO
JANUARY 25. BRIEFLY REFERRING TO POSITIVE DEVELOPMENTS
IN U.S.-SOVIET RELATIONS OVER PAST SEVEN YEARS, KORNIYENKO
NOTED STATEMENTS BY PRESIDENT CARTER AND BREZHNEV ON
DESIRE TO SETTLE OUTSTANDING MAJOR ISSUES. EXPRESSING
HOPE THAT CONCRETE PLANS WOULD SOON BE LAUNCHED TO
GET CONSTRUCTIVE RESULTS IN SALT AND DISARMAMENT, HE
SAID HE HOPED OUR EMBASSY IN MOSCOW WOULD PLAY A BIG
ROLE IN FACILITATING PROGRESS, NOTING PARENTHETICALLY
THAT IN THE PAST ON SOVIET SIDE MANY INITIATIVES HAD COME
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FROM SOVIET EMBASSY.

2. KORNIYENKO THEN SPENT NEXT 50 MINUTES HAMMERING
AWAY ON SPECIFIC PROBLEMS RELATING TO LIVING QUARTERS
CONSTRUCTION, SCHOOL, DACHA AND RELATED AMENITIES.
REVIEWING THE BIDDING ON THESE SUBJECTS, HE INSISTED
THAT SOVIET SIDE HAD BEEN SO EAGER TO BEGIN ITS

CONSTRUCTION PROGRAM IN WASHINGTON THAT IT HAD GONE BEYOND THE TERMS OF ITS WRITTEN OBLIGATIONS TO US AND GIVEN U.S. EMBASSY TREATMENT FOR MORE FAVORABLE THAN THAT GIVEN OTHER EMBASSIES, ONLY TO BE CONFRONTED SINCE 1974 WITH AN "ENDLESS" SERIES OF NEW, OFTEN UNREASONABLE, U.S. REQUESTS AND DEMANDS WHICH TAKEN TOGETHER SEEMED DESIGNED TO DELAY SOVIETS FROM BEGINNING THEIR CONSTRUCTION. SITUATION HAD NOW REACHED POINT WHERE, IF A BREAKTHROUGH WERE NOT IMMINENT, SOVIET SIDE WOULD FEEL CONSTRAINED TO WITHDRAW FROM "GENTLEMAN'S AGREEMENT," AND REVERT TO ROUTINE IMPLEMENTATION OF ITS WRITTEN OBLIGATIONS "WITHOUT ENTHUSIASM."

3. ASSURING KORNIYENKO THAT U.S. WAS NOT TRYING TO DRAG ITS FEET, AMBASSADOR EMPHASIZED THAT WE CANNOT SETTLE FOR MERE PROMISES AND AGREEMENTS "IN PRINCIPLE" OUR REASONABLE REQUESTS FOR RESOLUTION OF APARTMENT, SCHOOL, RECREATIONAL ISSUES HAVE NOT BEEN ADEQUATELY SATISFIED AND IT REMAINS THE SOVIETS RESPONSIBILITY AS A RECEIVING STATE TO ASSIST US IN RESOLVING THEM. AMBASSADOR SAID HE WAS CONFIDENT THAT IF BOTH SIDES SHOWED GOOD WILL AND DID A BIT MORE THESE PROBLEMS COULD BE RESOLVED.

4. KORNIYENKO SAID U.S. SIDE SEEMED TO BE BARGAINING FOR ALL IT COULD GET WHILE GIVING NOTHING UNTIL ITS INCREASINGLY "UNREALISTIC" DEMANDS WERE MET. HE DENIED THAT SOVIET SIDE WAS ATTEMPTING TO TIE APARTMENTS, SCHOOL AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES TO ISSUE OF PERMANENT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SITES AND APPEALED TO AMBASSADOR AS NEW MAN ON THE SPOT TO HELP BREAK THE IMPASSE. IN RESPONSE TO AMBASSADOR'S QUESTION WHETHER WE COULD HAVE DIRECT ACCESS-CORRIDOR TO NEW CHANCERY SITE, KORNIYENKO SAID THIS WAS IMPOSSIBLE SINCE THE CORRIDOR WAS TRAVERSED BY WATER PIPES AND "COMMUNICATIONS LINES" AND BELONGED TO AN ORGANIZATION WHICH WOULD NOT RELEASE IT.

5. TURNING TO USIA'S "PHOTO USA" EXHIBIT, AMBASSADOR ASKED WHAT WAS THE PROBLEM IN SCHEDULING IT IN LENINGRAD. HE HAD IMPRESSION THAT LENINGRAD AUTHORITIES WERE AGREEABLE BUT SAID PROBLEM LAY IN MOSCOW, YET MOSCOW AUTHORITIES SAID REVERSE. UNLESS THE MATTER WAS RESOLVED QUICKLY WE WOULD HAVE TO CANCEL LENINGRAD. KORNIYENKO SAID HE DID NOT HAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT THE PROBLEM LAY IN MOSCOW, THAT HE WOULD LOOK INTO IT AND GET BACK IN TOUCH IN ONE OR TWO DAYS. (AT ABOUT SAME TIME, P&C RECEIVED DEFINITIVE TURNDOWN ON LENINGRAD, THROUGH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, WITH SUGGESTION BAKU OR UFA BE

SUBSTITUTED (SEPTTEL).

6. IN CLOSING, KORNIYENKO NOTED THAT GROMYKO REGRETTED
HAVING BEEN AWAY "ON REST" DAY OF AMBASSADOR'S ARRIVAL
BUT LOOKED FORWARD TO SEEING AMBASSADOR AS SOON AS
POSSIBLE. MEMCON BEING POUCHED.
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